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ABSTRACT

The events of September 11, 2001 have driven home the lesson that, like it or not, U.S. citizens are connected with people the world over. The global transformations of the last decade have created an unparalleled need in the United States for expanded international knowledge and skills. However, the United States is not ready. There is a dangerous shortfall of individuals with global competence. The responsibility to reverse this trend lies with the U.S. educational system in partnership with government and the private sector. The United States must invest in an educational infrastructure that produces knowledge of languages and cultures and is able to train a sufficient and diverse pool of students to meet the needs of government agencies, the private sector, and education itself. This paper focuses on the partnership between the federal government and education institutions in international education. It calls for an urgently needed comprehensive national policy on international education that: (1) identifies national policy objectives for international education; (2) outlines specific strategies for meeting these objectives; and (3) provides the national programs, administrative structures, and resources required to implement these strategies. One appendix describes key federal programs promoting international education strategies, and another provides some facts and features of international education in the United States. (SLD)

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Beyond September 11:

A Comprehensive National Policy on International Education

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Endorsements

The following associations have endorsed *Beyond September 11: A Comprehensive National Policy on International Education:*

Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council of Teachers of Russian
American Council on Education
American Council on International Intercultural Education
Association for Asian Studies
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association of American Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Resource Centers
Council of Directors of the Language Resource Centers
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Institute of International Education
Joint National Committee for Languages
Middle East Studies Association
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Committee of International Studies and Program Administrators
National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages
National Humanities Alliance
North American Association of Teachers of Czech
Social Science Research Council
Southern California Consortium for International Studies
The College Board

May 12, 2002

Executive Summary

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, crystallized in a single, terrible moment the challenges of globalization and the importance of international research and education to our national security. Like it or not, Americans are connected with people the world over. And–driven by advancing technology–the rapid movement of people, goods, financial transactions, and ideas has generated new global and regional challenges in areas ranging from security and politics to business, health, law, the environment, and more.

Preserving freedom, security, and prosperity at home requires that Americans understand and adapt to a complex–and sometimes dangerous–world. Global peace and prosperity rest now more than ever on mutual understanding and productive engagement among all nations.

Like the challenge of Sputnik in 1957, the attacks of September 11 have brought America's international preparedness to a crossroads. The global transformations of the last decade have created an unparalleled need in the United States for expanded international knowledge and skills.

But the nation is unready. And our future success or failure in international endeavors will rely almost entirely on the global competence of our people. Global competence is a broad term that ranges from the in-depth knowledge required for interpreting information affecting national security, to the skills and understanding that foster improved relations with all regions of the world. It involves, among other things, foreign language proficiency and an ability to function effectively in other cultural environments and value systems, whether conducting business, implementing international development projects, or carrying out diplomatic missions.

Over the last several decades, however, expanding needs, rising costs, and declining investments in international and foreign language training have led the United States to a dangerous shortfall of individuals with global competence–a problem we have noted particularly in recent months. The responsibility to reverse this trend rests with the nation's educational system, in partnership with government and the private sector.

Creating true international capacity requires both educational reform and sustained financing. It cannot be achieved overnight. The United States must invest in an educational infrastructure that produces knowledge of languages and cultures, and must be able to steadily train a sufficient and diverse pool of American students to meet the needs of government agencies, the private sector, and education itself.

The importance of international students and scholars on American campuses to this enhanced global capacity cannot be overlooked. Their presence enriches the college experience for Americans. It also provides the United States with opportunities to educate the next generation of world leaders, and to engage in cooperative research and global problem solving.

Americans instinctively know the value of building global competence. Recent surveys show that the American public sees international education as essential to success in the job market and daily life. Consequently, the public supports more international education opportunities: foreign language study, opportunities to learn about cultures and global issues, international content in courses across the curriculum, study and internships abroad, scholarly exchanges, and opportunities to interact with international students.

The nation's education institutions are committed to international education and stand ready to implement the institutional reforms necessary to enhance our strategic capability. Hundreds of postsecondary institutions already have a successful infrastructure in place, but these must be strengthened. Others are just beginning. However, institutions cannot do the job alone. A strengthened and sustained federal leadership role, carried out in partnership with education institutions, state and local governments, and the private sector, is essential to meeting the challenge.

This paper focuses on the partnership between the federal government and education institutions on international education. It calls for an urgently needed comprehensive national policy on international education that:

1. Identifies national policy objectives for international education.
2. Outlines specific strategies for meeting these objectives.
3. Provides the national programs, administrative structures, and resources required to implement those strategies.

Three National Policy Objectives for International Education

Setting national policy objectives for international education will focus our schools and colleges, and our federal, state, local, and corporate leaders on this important issue. A national policy on international education should begin with the following three broad objectives:

1. Produce international experts and knowledge to address national strategic needs.
We must ensure that our educational system produces international experts and knowledge. The challenges that global transformation brings to national security, foreign policy, economic competitiveness, education, the environment, public health, and other areas call for many more U.S. citizens with sophisticated knowledge of other nations. High-level expertise is needed in foreign languages, cultures, and political, economic, and social systems throughout the world, as well as in transnational issues. We must also encourage more underrepresented minorities to enter international careers. On the whole, the quantity, level of expertise, and availability of U.S. personnel with required skills do not now match national strategic needs at home or abroad, as recently evidenced by the shortage of language experts in the war against terrorism.

2. Strengthen U.S. ability to solve global problems.
Our nation's continued well-being and prosperity increasingly depend on how the United States and other nations work cooperatively to solve global problems. A recent ACE survey suggests that 80 percent of Americans believe that the United States should take an active part in world affairs. Americans strongly support programs that address human suffering and that equip people with the education and training needed to solve their problems. Preventing the spread of infectious diseases, ending poverty and hunger, managing population growth, safeguarding the environment, gaining access to international markets, controlling weapons of mass destruction, and promoting the growth of democratic institutions are challenges that connect societies the world over. America's colleges and universities, businesses, and communities must be prepared to engage with government in new partnerships for cooperation on global problems. A critical element in this effort is the exchange of international students and scholars, who will both increase our mutual understanding of cultures and societies and be our nation's future partners in addressing global challenges.

The challenges that global transformation brings to national security, foreign policy, economic competitiveness, education, the environment, public health, and other areas call for many more U.S. citizens with sophisticated knowledge of other nations.

3. Develop a globally competent citizenry and workforce.

Globalization is driving demand for internationally competent citizens in almost all fields of endeavor. Whether in the culturally diverse U.S. workplace or on assignment abroad, business and government increasingly look for employees and managers who have crosscultural skills, foreign language proficiency, understanding of other world areas, and the ability to meet the international challenges of their field. The level of necessary global competency ranges from a citizen's general understanding of the world and appreciation of cultural diversity, to a corporate manager's ability to conduct business in another language and culture. Developing global competence is a long-term undertaking and must begin at an early age, especially for foreign language acquisition. When study of less commonly taught languages begins only at the college level, most students cannot attain proficiency during four years of undergraduate study.

Urgent Human Resource Needs for the 21st Century

Setting these objectives now is an urgent priority. The demand for qualified personnel with international skills is far greater than the current supply. Informed decision making on a growing number of policy and management issues depends on public- and private-sector personnel who understand other nations' systems, languages, cultures, and global problems. Lack of this expertise will carry serious costs in terms of potential foreign policy failures, military blunders, terrorism, and a decline in U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Government Needs

More than 80 federal agencies and offices now rely on personnel with foreign language proficiency and international knowledge and experience. Expertise is especially needed in world regions of strategic significance. The need is acute among the national security, defense, and foreign policy agencies, which report shortfalls in the supply of qualified candidates, deficits in readiness, and adverse impacts on operations. Several agencies operate their own foreign language institutes because, in the words of one Congressional witness, "we have learned that the high school and college language programs do not meet our needs in terms of numbers, proficiency level, and specific languages."

Despite their own language training programs, federal agencies recently scrambled to address deficiencies in the less commonly taught and hard-to-learn languages, such as those of Central Eurasia, South Asia, and the Middle East. Faced with shortages of language experts after September 11, the FBI sought U.S. citizens who were fluent in Arabic, Persian, or Pashto to help with the nation's probe into the terrorism attack. In March 2002, the General Accounting Office released a study of the foreign language needs of five federal agencies. It found that shortages of staff with foreign language skills at those agencies "have adversely affected agency operations and hindered U.S. military, law enforcement, intelligence, counterterrorism, and diplomatic efforts." Fewer than 1 percent of American graduate students are studying languages deemed by the federal government to be critical to national security. Prior to September 11, not one U.S. college or university regularly offered Pashto, the language of the Taliban.

Private-Sector Needs

Federal agencies compete not only with one another for globally competent personnel, but also with the private sector. U.S. business is widely engaged around the world with joint ventures, partnerships, and economic linkages that require globally competent employees. Recent studies on the internationalization of American business education found that knowledge of other cultures, crosscultural communication skills, experience in international business, and fluency in a foreign language are among the top skills sought by corporations involved in international business.

Informed decision making on a growing number of policy and management issues depends on public- and private-sector personnel who understand other nations' systems, languages, cultures, and global problems.

Continued health and prosperity in the United States are linked to global health and prosperity. Addressing global issues such as environmental degradation, disease, overpopulation, and food shortages requires cooperation between the United States and the developing world. Government, higher education, nongovernmental organizations, and corporations need skilled personnel to carry out new partnerships to help developing countries build the capacity for meeting challenges on their own. Thus, long-term global security is enhanced by promoting economic prosperity, social well-being, and political stability the world over.

Higher Education Needs

Producing a citizenry with global competence is the responsibility of our nation's educational system. However, education institutions themselves face a shortage of teachers with global competence. Higher education lacks sufficient foreign language faculty–especially for the less commonly taught languages–as well as area and international studies specialists. Additionally, faculty in professional disciplines, such as business, public health, law, and the environment, need greater international expertise. Lack of priority, rising costs, and dwindling funds from all sources have eroded higher education's capacity to produce the numbers and variety of experts needed today and prepare globally competent citizens.

The problem exists in elementary and secondary schools as well. In November 2000, former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley testified before a Congressional subcommittee that approximately 25 percent of schools seeking to hire foreign language teachers were unable to find them. K–12 foreign language teaching suffers from a shortage of funds and teachers, a lack of high-quality materials, poor academic counseling, and inadequate in-service training of teachers. Moreover, few teacher education programs in the United States focus on preparing their students to impart international knowledge and skills in the K–12 classroom.

Public Support for International Education

Finally, Americans instinctively see the need for developing more international skills and knowledge in the United States. Recent American Council on Education surveys found that, among the general public:

- Ninety-three percent think knowledge about international issues is important, especially for future generations.
- An equal percentage think that greater understanding of other cultures and customs is important to our ability to compete successfully in a global economy.
- More than 75 percent favor college and university requirements for international courses, foreign languages, and study or internship abroad experiences.

- Eighty-six percent believe having international students on campus enriches the learning experience of American students.

Among incoming college students:

- More than 70 percent believe it is important that colleges and universities offer international experiences and opportunities, especially to enable students to gain exposure to another culture and develop foreign language proficiency.
- Almost 60 percent express a strong preference to study or work abroad for a semester.
- Eighty-three percent believe it is important for colleges and universities to offer opportunities to interact with students from other countries.

If this level of interest is any indication, a focused effort to enhance international education throughout the U.S. educational system will be well-received by our citizens.

A National Strategy on International Education

The strategies outlined below are the foundation for a comprehensive national agenda on international education. They can be implemented most effectively through a partnership of education institutions and the federal government, with assistance from state and local governments and the private sector. Several federal programs exist to address these strategies (see Appendix I), but they must be strengthened and expanded, and new initiatives must be considered.

Enhance Foreign Language, Area and International Studies, and Business Education

Federally supported foreign language, area and international studies, and international business education programs at U.S. universities provide a storehouse of knowledge and produce high-level experts to address national security, economic, and educational challenges.

The successes that resulted from the original high levels of federal funding for these programs during the Cold War proved that the government–higher education partnership to produce international expertise works well. But the decline of such funding in real terms has gradually eroded higher education's capacity to produce the expertise we need today.

An effective, long-term response can reverse this trend. Just as the federal government maintains military reserves housed in civil society to be called upon when needed, it should maintain international expertise and training at higher education institutions to be drawn upon in times of need, such as federally funded university centers with expertise on the Middle East and South and Inner Asia; informational activities on campus; and extensive outreach to government, business, the media, community organizations, and other education institutions. As the events of September 11 illustrated, this expertise cannot be invented. It must be cultivated and sustained.

Graduate and undergraduate programs that produce the core knowledge and experts needed for national security, economic competitiveness, and U.S. foreign policy leadership must be strengthened.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Increase the number of experts with high-level foreign language proficiency and in-depth knowledge of world areas, business systems, and transnational issues–especially those of non-Western European nations.

2. Significantly expand the international knowledge of faculty and graduate students in professional and technical fields such as business, education, the environment, law, crime and terrorism, economics, finance, health, food and hunger, conflict resolution, and information technology.

Federally supported foreign language, area and international studies, and international business education programs at U.S. universities provide a storehouse of knowledge and produce high-level experts to address national security, economic, and educational challenges.

3. Increase the diversity of U.S. students who major in international fields and enter international service or teaching.

4. Increase outreach activities to provide government agencies, corporations, education institutions, and the media with the international knowledge and skills available through university foreign language, area, and international business resource centers and programs.

Internationalize Teaching and Learning

Preparing all citizens to become effective workers in an increasingly diverse and multicultural workplace requires that all students–from K-16–learn a foreign language, experience international content throughout the curriculum, and enjoy relevant internship opportunities. This will require a change in priorities at schools and colleges about the importance of foreign language and cultural learning.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Ensure that all students have significant exposure, throughout primary and secondary grades, to international and comparative content and foreign language education.

2. Ensure that every postsecondary undergraduate experiences a curriculum designed to impart crosscultural understanding and skills, an international dimension in the major field of study, and a broad understanding of global issues.

3. Increase the number and diversity of students throughout the educational spectrum, from elementary through professional level, who learn and become fluent in a second language, especially in non-Western European languages.

4. Increase the number and diversity of adult learners, employees, and managers who learn international and crosscultural skills.

5. Increase the number and diversity of faculty, teachers, and education administrators who have the knowledge and skills needed to educate a new generation of globally competent citizens.

6. Recruit and educate a new generation of K-16 foreign language teachers with an expanded range of abilities that will allow us to increase the number of languages and language programs offered, beginning in elementary school. In particular, we need many more K-12 teachers who can teach less commonly taught languages in continual instruction, from elementary through high school.

Promote International Research

International research produces the core knowledge that the nation needs to make sound foreign policy decisions, address defense and national security challenges, solve global problems, and support international business. Its results also help educators internationalize the curriculum at all levels.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

Research on International Issues and Areas

1. Expand higher education institutions' research capacity to continuously update and diversify international knowledge in a broad range of disciplines and fields, about countries and global issues that are vital to U.S. national interests and economic competitiveness.

Research on Internationalizing U.S. Education

1. Investigate and define the foreign language skills and global competencies needed by government, business, and education institutions.

2. Investigate and map the capacity of our education institutions to impart international skills and knowledge, including the identification of key shortfalls in faculty supply, curriculum, and study abroad programs.

3. Discover more effective ways to impart high levels of foreign language proficiency and international knowledge and skills.

4. Increase research and evaluation of international applications of technology for learning and information access.

Enhance Institutional Linkages Abroad

Partnerships with higher education institutions abroad enable U.S. colleges and universities to strengthen their curricula and research, provide their students and faculty with opportunities to learn about other countries and cultures, and cooperate in addressing common issues and problems. They also help partner universities in developing nations draw upon expanded resources to produce the leaders, officials, managers, scientists, and technicians required to create sustainable economic growth and stable societies. Higher education institutions play a key role in cooperative development by working with their partners in business and the community to link with counterparts around the world, bringing a variety of resources and skills to bear on global problems.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Strengthen, expand, and replicate models of mutually beneficial partnerships between U.S. education institutions and those abroad.

2. Promote educational exchanges and research collaboration with education institutions abroad, including those chartered in the United States that build capacity in foreign institutions and promote language learning and cultural understanding for U.S. students.

3. Encourage partnerships that will facilitate education and curriculum development in a wider range of countries and institutions.

4. Encourage partnerships for cooperative research and learning to solve global problems.

Increase Study and Internships Abroad

Senator William Fulbright said that exchange programs are intended "to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby to increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship." Study abroad greatly enhances students' foreign language abilities, crosscultural skills, and understanding of other cultures. Though it is an essential experiential component of international education, fewer than 1 percent

Partnerships with higher education institutions abroad enable U.S. colleges and universities to strengthen their curricula and research, provide their students and faculty with opportunities to learn about other countries and cultures, and cooperate in addressing common issues and problems.

(147,000) of the nation's 15 million higher education students studied abroad last year. Even fewer study abroad for one semester or more, and most study in Western Europe.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Substantially increase the number of U.S. students, from high school through professional education, who study or intern abroad.

2. Encourage more students to work or study abroad for at least a semester.

3. Integrate study abroad more fully into the high school and higher education curriculum, especially with foreign language instruction.

4. Promote ethnic, socioeconomic, and gender diversity among study abroad participants.

5. Diversify both the subjects studied abroad and the locations where students study to include more countries outside of Western Europe.

Increase the Number of International Students

It would be very shortsighted of the United States to close its doors to students from other nations because of the terrorist attacks. Educating international students is an important way to infuse U.S. campuses with a variety of cultures to impart cross-cultural understanding, spread U.S. values and influence, and create goodwill for the United States throughout the world.

The presence of more than 500,000 international students on U.S. campuses also provides us with the opportunity to educate the next generation of world leaders–an incalculable foreign policy asset. For example, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, Jordan's King Abdullah II, and Mexican President Vicente Fox all attended U.S. universities. Moreover, the talents many international students bring to such areas as computational science and biomedical research have advanced the quality of learning and life around the world.

The federal government has the right and responsibility to protect the safety and security of the United States by deciding who should receive a visa–any type of visa–to visit this country. Colleges that admit and enroll international students have an obligation and a responsibility to work cooperatively with the federal government in keeping track of those students.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Ensure that the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) provides necessary national security protection and is funded adequately. It should not become a barrier to bona fide students wishing to attend U.S. universities.

2. Ensure that U.S. embassies have the consular capacity to handle the flow of international students and exchange visitors and provide the proper background checks.

3. Promote increased numbers of international students in the United States by modernizing and streamlining visa, taxation, and employment policies and regulations, thus facilitating entry for bona fide short-term and degree students and enabling these students to maximize their exposure to American society and culture through internships and employment.

4. Improve the availability of accurate information overseas about U.S. educational opportunities, by strengthening and increasing support for our network of overseas advising centers.

5. Without compromising security, establish procedures and train consular officials to ensure that students admitted to community colleges and other fully accredited but lesser known institutions of higher education are given full and fair consideration when applying for a visa.

Increase Scholarly and Citizen Exchanges

International exchange programs have done much to extend U.S. influence in the world by building bridges of understanding. Yet they have not received adequate federal policy priority in recent years. Although recent funding for these programs has increased, it still lags far behind its levels of a decade ago in constant dollars, and participant levels have significantly decreased.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Expand the international exchange of teachers, students, and scholars to enhance U.S. global competence and promote knowledge and understanding of the United States in other countries.

2. Increase support for citizen and professional exchanges that reach communities across the United States, build support for U.S. international engagement, and frequently support and intersect with scholarly activities.

3. Streamline and reform regulations governing citizen, professional, and other exchanges so that they meet security concerns as well as encourage an increased number of participants.

Make Greater Use of Technology for Learning and Information Access

Higher education institutions can greatly advance international education in the United States by using technology to provide a variety of citizens and organizations with access to information and learning. For example, small and mid-size corporations seeking to penetrate emerging markets require access to key market and cultural information. Local and state government agencies need to know where to look for foreign language or area expertise. Regardless of their location, teachers, faculty, and students in K-12 schools, colleges, and universities seeking to internationalize their curriculum or conduct research all benefit from easy access to timely information and expertise. Access to information about and from other countries, distance learning, and outreach are just a few of the many activities being developed using the Internet and satellite technology.

Nationwide efforts should be made to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Use technology to enhance access to international experts and knowledge for educators, government, businesses, and the general public.

2. Develop and encourage the use of innovative technology applications to advance foreign language learning.

3. Increase the use of technology to provide courses and other programs that promote international learning, especially for students who are unable to study abroad, nontraditional students, and adult learners, as well as for linking U.S. students abroad to courses and advisers on their home campuses.

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Rejoin UNESCO

The U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO in 1984 has deprived the U.S. government and the scientific and higher education communities of important opportunities to participate in potentially beneficial cultural, scientific, and educational forums. It has been well established and agreed upon by Congressional leaders that the issues causing the U.S. withdrawal have been addressed. Rejoining UNESCO would provide important opportunities for U.S. academics to collaborate with their colleagues around the world and bring these important perspectives back to their campuses. Readmission to UNESCO would be timely and ensure that the United States can fully benefit from expanded opportunities for international dialogue and cooperation.

The Federal Government's Role in and Partnership with Education

The federal government's role in international education stems from its responsibility to ensure that the nation is prepared to respond to international and global challenges. Sustained leadership for international education is essential because of the clear relevance of global competence to critical national agendas in foreign policy, security, and the economy. A critical element of that leadership is a forthright statement by the federal government declaring the importance of international education to America's long-term national interests and establishing a national policy to promote international education.

The Critical Role of Federal Funding

Over the last four decades, programs in several federal agencies have supported international education, as detailed in Appendix I. These programs have ranged from the production of foreign language experts and internationally focused studies, to international exchange programs. With modest incentives under the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Fulbright-Hays), the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, and, more recently, the National Security Education Program, higher education institutions have successfully developed a considerable international capacity. Today, high-cost regional expertise and experts in less commonly taught languages are found primarily in colleges and universities receiving federal funding. Federal funding also has stimulated efforts to internationalize American business schools. Partnerships with universities abroad have furthered the country's capacity to engage in global problem solving. The Fulbright-Hays exchange programs are especially highly regarded throughout the world, and have stimulated reciprocal investments in exchanges by foreign governments.

These programs are essential because neither the states nor local communities have primary interest or responsibility for addressing what are long-term national priorities. Nor can universities alone cover the full cost of addressing international education priorities. Federal funding is an essential catalyst for developing, maintaining, and providing access to interdisciplinary academic and exchange programs–many of which would not exist without federal assistance. It also supports university outreach programs to K–12 schools, business, government, and the public in areas of national need. Federal funding has a multiplier effect, stimulating support from state and local governments and the private sector, including foundations, whose priorities may sometimes complement national needs but do not always coincide with them. States have particular regional interests, the private sector has short-term, bottom-line interests, and foundations have highly specialized concerns that vary over time. While these sectors have supported short-

Partnerships with universities abroad have furthered the country's capacity to engage in global problem solving. The Fulbright-Hays exchange programs are especially highly regarded throughout the world, and have stimulated reciprocal investments in exchanges by foreign governments.

term projects, they generally have not provided the long-term, sustained support for study and research needed to produce the nation's global competence. However, the social and economic well-being of states, communities, and the private sector is increasingly tied to international involvement. It is time for them to review their priorities and commit to building the nation's global competence.

The Urgent Need for New Resources

Federal programs provide critical incentives for international education programs, but they are chronically underfunded. Combined federal spending under the largest international higher education and academic exchange programs in the U.S. Departments of Education, State, and Defense is roughly $280 million–less than 1 percent of federal discretionary expenditures for higher education. In addition to increased funding for these programs, new initiatives may be needed to address national challenges.

If we are to ensure our national security and economic well-being, the federal government must lead, in partnership with education institutions, in developing and implementing an action plan to focus nationwide attention and resources on building America's global competence.

Conclusion

Global transformations have made it imperative that the United States have citizens with a broad set of international skills and crosscultural understanding, and far more international experts on a greater variety of world regions and issues. Meeting these needs will take a generation of education and reform. The federal government must act now. The administration and the Congress must take a leadership role in declaring a national policy on international education, raise the level of awareness as to the importance of global competence to U.S. national interest, and stimulate concerted nationwide efforts to address these challenges.

APPENDIX I
Key Federal Programs Promoting International Education Strategies

U.S. Department of Education

The Department of Education supports international education through a number of efforts, most funded through Title VI of the Higher Education Act. These programs include: National Foreign Language and Area Studies Resource Centers; Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships; Centers for International Business Education and Research; National Foreign Language Resource Centers; American Overseas Research Centers; Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages; Research and Studies; Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access; Business and International Education; and the Institute for International Public Policy.

The Department also manages the Fulbright-Hays program, which supports faculty and dissertation research abroad as well as group projects and seminars abroad for teachers and administrators.

The Department's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) is a comprehensive program that supports innovative projects in higher education, including many in international studies and foreign languages. Three consortia programs support projects in cooperation with higher education institutions in three areas of the world: North America, the European Union, and Brazil.

The Department's Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) supports grants to states to improve foreign language teaching and learning at the K-12 levels and to local education agencies for model instructional programs. FLAP is the only federally funded program that supports foreign language programs at the K-12 level.

U.S. Department of State

The Department of State administers a variety of educational and cultural exchange programs, including the Fulbright-Hays Program for scholarly faculty and student exchanges; the Educational Partnerships Program (previously known as the College and University Affiliations Programs), which promotes partnerships between U.S. and foreign higher education institutions; other academic exchanges; and professional and cultural exchanges, including the Citizens Exchange Program and the International Visitors Program.

The Department of State also funds a Russian, Eurasian, and East European Research and Training Program (Title VIII) to develop national expertise in these areas. And, the Department's Foreign Study Grants for U.S. Undergraduates (Gilman Program) provide study abroad scholarships to needy American undergraduate students.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID supports academic involvement in international development projects, training in the United States for technical and professional personnel from developing countries, and linkages with universities in developing nations.

Other Departments and Agencies

Many other federal departments and independent agencies also support important international education activities.

The Department of Defense supports the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which provides funds for undergraduate and graduate student study abroad in areas less frequently visited by U.S. students. NSEP also supports institutional efforts to develop new international programs at the undergraduate level.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) supports scholarly work in foreign languages and area studies, as well as the history and literature of other nations.

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Division of International Programs encourages collaborative science and engineering research and education by supporting joint projects between U.S. organizations and institutions and their international counterparts.

APPENDIX II
International Education in the United States: Recent Facts and Figures

Foreign Languages

- Overall foreign language enrollments in U.S. higher education fell from 16 percent of total student enrollments in 1960 to just 8 percent today. The number of four-year colleges with foreign language entrance and graduation requirements also declined during that period.

- Foreign language enrollments have grown at the K–12 level and in community colleges over the last decade.

Less Commonly Taught Foreign Languages

- Only 5 percent of all higher education students taking foreign languages study non-European languages, that is, those spoken by roughly 85 percent of the world's population. Of these students, only about 10 percent complete four years of instruction, and an even smaller number go on to the graduate level.

- Fewer than 1 percent of American graduate students are studying languages deemed critical to national security by the federal government.

- Just prior to September 11, no U.S. university offered Pashto, the language of the Taliban, on a full-time basis.

- More than 80 percent of the graduate language enrollments in the least commonly taught languages are located at federally funded university resource centers.

Foreign Languages at the K–12 Level

- Despite studies that show learning a foreign language at an early age promotes proficiency, fewer than one-third of K-12 students are enrolled in foreign language courses and most of these students are studying the commonly taught languages.

- At the K–12 levels, international and foreign language education has, by and large, not ranked high on the agenda. Nor has preparing K–12 teachers with appropriate international skills and knowledge been a priority at colleges and universities.

- Few foreign language programs that provide continuous instruction from elementary through high school are aimed at a high level of proficiency, as defined by national standards.

International Business Education

- A 1999 study on the internationalization of American business education found that U.S. business schools "do not currently graduate an adequate supply of graduates who are capable of handling entry-level and mid-level international business responsibilities." Yet the reality of business today suggests that international business will soon evolve from optional major to core component of the entire business curriculum.

- Few MBA programs in the United States offered courses with international content prior to the inception of federal funding a decade ago. Since that time, more than 3.5 million students have benefited from improved international business education as a result of federal incentives.

Study Abroad

- Though it is an essential, experiential component of an effective international education, fewer than 1 percent (147,000) of the nation's 15 million higher education students studied abroad last year. Even fewer study abroad for one semester or more, and most study in Western Europe.

International Students

- More than 500,000 international students and their dependents in the United States contributed about $12 billion to the U.S. economy in 1999-2000.

- Visas given to international students accounted for fewer than 2 percent of the total visas granted in 1999. These numbers illustrate that while the number of international students is large, it is a small proportion of the total number of visas that are issued.

- Although U.S. higher educational institutions remain the world's largest recipient of international students, the proportion of international students choosing to study in the United States has declined in the last two decades. An increasingly competitive international education market has spurred other nations to aggressively pursue an increased share of these students.

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